

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 02104 021108Z

15

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00

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R 020951Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5292

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2104

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, MO

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S AUDIENCE WITH KING HASSAN: ATMOSPHERE

1. DURING MY HOUR-LONG AUDIENCE WITH KING HASSAN
APRIL 30 (ROYAL CABINET DIRECTOR BENSUDA WAS ALSO PRESENT)
I WAS STRUCK BY HOW WELL THE KING LOOKED AND BY HOW
WELL HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF DURING THE INTERVIEW. MANY
RUMORS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING HERE THAT KING HAS NOT
RECOVERED WELL FROM HIS JANUARY 15 OPERATION AND
THAT HE WAS GRAVELY AFFLICTED BY SOME SERIOUS MALADY,
MOST OFTEN SAID TO BE RECTAL CANCER. THE KING DID LOOK
SOMEWHAT OLDER THAN USUAL AND TOLD ME THAT RECOVERY
FROM THE KIND OF SURGERY HE HAD UNDERGONE WAS INVARIABLY
SLOW. HE HAS SWITCHED FROM CIGARETTES TO CIGARS ON
MEDICAL ADVICE. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, HE APPEARED VERY
FIT AND THE PAIN WHICH HAD EARLIER MADE IT DIFFICULT TO
MOVE ABOUT EASILY SEEMED TO HAVE DISAPPEARED.

2. MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIS PHYSICAL APPEARANCE WAS
HIS HIGH STATE OF MENTAL ALERTNESS. AFTER BRIEF INITIAL
EXCHANGE OF PLEASANTRIES, I LISTED THE TOPICS ON WHICH
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PAGE 02 RABAT 02104 021108Z

I INTENDED TO SEEK HIS VIEWS. THE REST OF THE MEETING

WAS ESSENTIALLY A LONG MONOLOGUE ON HIS PART IN WHICH HE COVERED WITHOUT PROMPTING AND IN DETAIL EACH OF THE MATTERS I HAD RAISED. HIS EXTREMELY RAPID, CONCISE, AND WELL-ORGANIZED PRESENTATION CERTAINLY DID NOT SEEM TO BE THAT OF A SICK MAN.

3. TOPICS COVERED IN MY AUDIENCE ARE BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY.
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